

throughout the county where human habitation exists. There are approximately 1560 homes in the areas identified as high priority by the fire districts. If it is assumed that all of these homes are at high risk, which they may not be, this leaves nearly 5600 homes at high risk throughout the county that are outside the priority areas. This is illustrated in Table 4.

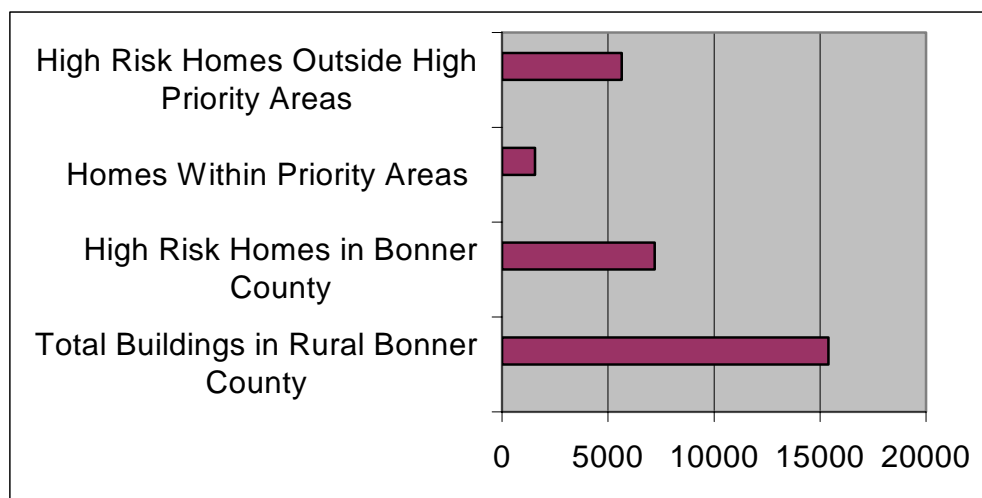


Table 4 Buildings at Risk in Rural Bonner County

PREPAREDNESS ASSESSMENT

The risk assessment would not be complete without an evaluation of existing wildland fire fighting resources, capabilities and overall preparedness. This section of the plan will give the reader an overview of existing planning, fire fighting resources, training, education, and other preparedness issues.

Planning

Bonner County has an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that provides standard operating procedures in case of a disaster. The EOP adopts the use of the Incident Command System (ICS) to manage disasters. The ICS is used nation wide by both state and federal agencies in the management of disasters. In the Bonner County EOP a warning system is in place that would alert residents to an impending threat from a wildfire and through it's operational guides provides for evacuation procedures.

Fire District Resources

There are 12 fire districts and three (3) City Fire Departments in Bonner County with varying degrees of capability. The fire districts are primarily structure protection oriented and will fight wild fires when homes are threaten. The majority of the fire fighters in the fire districts are volunteers. Following is a list of equipment, personnel, and facilities for each of the fire districts/departments in Bonner County. The size of each district is also included.

The following table will help to understand the characteristics of each engine type listed in the existing inventory of equipment for each of the fire agencies.

Table 5							
Engine and Water Tender Types							
Engines	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4	Type 5	Type 6	Type 7
Pump Capacity (gpm)	1000	500	120	70	50	50	20
Tank Capacity (gallons)	400	400	500	750	500	200	125
Hose, 2 1/2" (feet)	1200	1000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hose, 1 1/2" (feet)	400	500	1000	300	300	300	200
Hose, 1" (feet)	200	300	800	300	300	300	200
Ladder (feet)	20	20	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Heavy Stream (gpm)	500	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Personnel (min. Number)	4	3	3	3	3	2	2
Water Tenders							
Pump (gpm)	300	200	200	n/a			
Tank Capacity	5000	2500	1000	1000			

Coolin-Cavanaugh Bay Fire District

The district covers 6,187 acres and has one fire station located in Coolin.

Fire apparatus includes:

One Type 2 Engine
One Type 6 Engine
One Type 3 Water Tender

Personnel:

The district has five volunteer fire fighters

Plans for the future include the construction of a new fire station in Coolin and a new station in Cavanaugh Bay.

North of the Narrows Fire District

There are no existing facilities or fire apparatus at this time. The district covers 2,270 acres. However, this district anticipates construction of a fire Station and the purchase of a fireboat.

Northside Fire District

The district covers 71,313 acres and has four fire stations located. The stations are located in Ponderay, north of Ponderay on state highway 95, on Lightning Creek Road and on Samuels Road.

Fire apparatus includes:

- Five Type 2 Engines
- Three Type 6 engines
- One 1700 gallon Water Tender
- One 1500 gallon Water Tender
- One 1000 gallon Water Tender

Personnel:

Two paid and twenty-five volunteer fire fighters.

There are no plans to expand facilities or district boundaries at this time.

Sagle Fire District

The district has three fire stations. The stations are located in Sagle, Careywood, and on Cocolalla Loop Rd. The district covers 104,400 acres.

Fire apparatus includes:

- Two Type 1 Engines
- One Type 6 Engine
- Two Type 3 Water Tenders

Personnel:

Three paid and eleven volunteer fire fighters.

Plans for expansion: The District plans to start construction of a fire station at Garfield Bay and Jewel Lake in the spring of 2004.

Schweitzer Fire District

The district covers 203 acres and has one fire station located at 7094 Schweitzer Mountain Road.

Fire apparatus includes:

- One Type 1 Engine
- Two Type 2 Engines
- One Type 6 Engine
- One Type 1 Water Tender

Personnel:

One paid and fourteen volunteer fire fighters.

Additional subdivisions are in the works or planned which border the district. The new subdivisions will need to be annexed into the district sometime in the future. Additional fire substations will be necessary to provide adequate fire protection for the subdivisions.

Spirit Lake Fire District

Although located in Kootenai County, Spirit Lake provides fire protection for a large area in southwest Bonner County. The total area covered by the Spirit Lake Fire District is 24,204 acres. The district has three fire stations, one at Spirit Lake, at Blanchard, and one at Spirit Lake Cut-off.

Fire apparatus includes:

- Three Type 1 Engines
- One Type 2 Engine
- Two Type 5 Engines
- Two Type 6 Engines
- Two Type 2 Water Tenders
- Two 1500 Gallon Water Tenders

Personnel:

Seven paid and twenty volunteer fire fighters.

There are no plans to expand facilities or the district at this time.

West Bonner Fire District

This district contracts with the City of Newport, Washington for fire protection. West Bonner provides three volunteers for Newport.

There are not plans to build facilities or expand the district in Bonner County.

West Pend Oreille Fire District

This district covers 34,589 acres and includes the cities of Priest River and Oldtown. There is one fire station located on Hwy 57 near the airport in Priest River.

Fire apparatus includes:

- Two Type 1 Engines
- Four Type 6 Engines
- One Type 7 Engine
- One Type 2 Water Tender
- One Type 4 Water Tender

Personnel:

Thirty seven volunteer fire fighters.

Future expansion plans include a new station on the Peninsula Road north on Hwy 57.

West Priest Lake Fire District

The district has two fire stations. One station is located at Nordman and the other is located at Kalispell Bay. The district covers 460 acres.

Fire apparatus includes:

- Two Type 1 Engines
- One Type 3 Tender
- One 3000 Gal. Tender
- One type 4 Fire Boat

Personnel: The District has twenty-five volunteer fire fighters

A third fire station is planned for the Lamb Creek area. The District will take delivery of another Type 1 engine in 2004. There are no plans to expand the district at this time.

Westside Fire District

The district covers 13,458 acres and recently annexed Laclede that includes additional acres. The district has two fire stations. One station is located in Dover and the other is located at Laclede.

Fire apparatus includes:

- One Type 1 Engine
- Three Type 2 Engines
- One Type 3 Engine
- One Type 6 Engine
- One 2500 gal. Tender
- One 1800 gal. Tender
- One 1200 gal. Tender
- One 1000 gal. Tender

Personnel:

One paid and nineteen volunteer fire fighters.

Future plans for facilities include the construction of a new station at Wrenco Loop and Baldy Mountain. Plans also include relocation of the station in Dover plus completion of a training facility/office for the Laclede Station.

SamOwen Fire District

The district covers the SamOwen Peninsula. At the present time the district does not have a fire station. Plans are to start construction of a fire station at the intersection of Hwy 200 and Spring Creek Rd. in the spring of 2004.

Fire Apparatus includes:

- Two Type 1 Engines
- One Type 2 Tender
- One Type 3 Tender

Personnel: Eleven volunteer fire fighters.

The Fire Chief expects the district to expand in a couple of years.

Clark Fork Volunteer Fire Department

The Clark Fork Fire Department has two fire stations in Clark Fork.

Fire Apparatus includes:

- One Type 1 Engine
- One Type 7 Engine
- One Type 4 Tender

Personnel:

The Department has eight volunteer fire fighters.

There are no plans to expand the fire district.

Hope/East Hope City Fire Department

The fire district has one fire station located in East Hope and provides structure protection for Hope and East Hope.

Fire Apparatus includes:

- Two Type 1 Engines
- One Type 6 Engine
- One 2500 gal. Tender

Personnel:

The department has nineteen volunteer fire fighters.

The department has no plans for expansion or new facilities at this time.

Priest River Fire Department

Priest River Volunteer Fire Department has one fire station located in the town of Priest River on Cedar Street.

Fire Apparatus includes:

Two Type 1 Engines
One Type 4 Tender

Personnel:

The Department has fifteen volunteer fire fighters

There are no plans to expand the district or facilities at this time.

Sandpoint Fire Department

The district includes the City of Sandpoint. The City has one fire station located at 1123 Lake Street in Sandpoint.

Fire Apparatus includes:

One Type 1 Engine
Two type 2 Engines

Personnel:

Ten paid and seven volunteer fire fighters.

There are no plans to expand the district or facilities at this time.

Idaho Department of Lands Resources

In general, Idaho Department of Lands is responsible for fire suppression on private and state lands within their response area. In Bonner County, the Department of Lands has two Protection Districts, one for the Priest Lake area and the other for the remaining portions of the county.

Priest Lake Forest Protective District

The Priest Lake District includes the east side of Priest Lake north to the Bonner Co./Boundary Co. line. The District has one fire station located on Highway 57 near Priest Lake.

Fire apparatus includes:

One Type 4 Engine
One Type 5 Engine
One Type 6 Engine

One Type 7 Engine
One Medium Dozer (Cat D-5)

Personnel:

Three permanent and eleven seasonal paid employees.

There are no plans to expand facilities at this time

Pend Oreille Forest Protective District

The Pend Oreille District includes all of Bonner County except for the area covered by the Priest Lake District. The District has one fire station located in Sandpoint.

Fire apparatus includes:

One Type 4 Engine
One Type 6 Engine
Two Type 7 Engines
One Type 3 Dozer
One Type 3 Water Tender

There are no plans to expand facilities at this time.

United States Forest Service resources

The Forest Service is responsible for suppression of fires on federal lands and private lands within their response area

Priest Lake Ranger District

The Priest Lake Ranger District covers the west side of Priest Lake north to the Bonner County line.

Fire apparatus includes:

One Type 4 Engine
Two Type 6 Engines
One Type 4 Fire Boat

Priest Lake Ranger District has plans to expand its office and fire cache.

Bonniers Ferry Ranger District

This district covers the area east of Priest Lake and east to the Montana border, then north to the Canadian border

Fire Apparatus includes:

Three Type 4 Engines
One Type 6 Engine

There are no plans for expansion.

Sandpoint Ranger District

This district covers the east side of Bonner County and Lake Pend Oreille to the Montana border, south to Farragut State park and north to Elmira Peak.

Fire apparatus includes:

- One Type 4 Engine
- One Type 5 Engine
- One Type 6 Engine

There are no plans for expansion.

Equipment/Facility Needs Identified

The fire districts/departments in Bonner County were ask to identify equipment and facility needs to help mitigate the risks associated with wildland fire. Following is the list of needs identified by the fire districts/departments.

Clark Fork Fire Department

- Site acquisition and construction of a new fire station.
- 10 additional fire hydrants around town.
- 10 EPH/Narrow band handheld radios
- 3 EPH/Narrow bond Mobile radios
- Conditioning charger for radios
- 5 drip torches

Northside Fire District

- 9 dry hydrants

Sagle Fire District

- 1 Type 6 Wildland Engine
- Personal Protective Equipment

Sam Owen Fire District

- Personal Protective Equipment

Schweitzer Fire District

- 1 Type 6 Wildland Engine

Westside Fire District

- 3 dry hydrants
- Water storage system at remote station
- 1 Type 6 Wildland Engine
- Barricade Gel Package
- New fire station in Wrenco area

Water Supply

Bonner County Fire District Chiefs identified the need for standardized dry hydrants across the county in order to facilitate mutual aid. The chiefs also identified the need for requiring the developer of new subdivisions to provide adequate water supply for fire fighting purposes.

Communications

Radio communication between the varied emergency response agencies is necessary in order to ensure safe and appropriate deployment and coordination of resources in response to an emergency. As stated in the Bonner County Emergency Operations Plan the "...current emergency radio communication system is inadequate to handle multiple and varied government agency traffic." Emergency response agencies in the county have agreed to pursue improvement of the existing system in order to address this issue.

Training

In order for fire agencies to be effective and efficient in fighting fire in the wildland urban interface, their personnel must be well trained in wildland fire behavior and fire fighting techniques used in fighting interface fires. The Idaho Department of Lands and the Forest Service provide this type of training to their personnel on a continuing basis. In addition, the Department of Lands offers this training to local fire departments and fire districts in Bonner County. The Forest Service also invites local departments and districts to participate in their training.

Public Education

Home Hazard Assessments

Individual home assessments are based on fire safe characteristics related to access, the surrounding landscape, the yard surrounding a home, water supply, and the homes roof. For example, are there at least two exit routes from the area?, is the access road wide enough to accommodate incoming fire engines and exiting evacuating vehicles?, is the roof clear of dead leaves and needles?, are there branches overhanging the chimney?, does the home have adequate clearance from flammable vegetation?, is the LPG tank at least 30 feet from any structure?, is there a water supply that meets fire department needs? These are only a few of the items that would be evaluated during a home assessment.

A canvass of the fire districts in Bonner County reveals the need for a coordinated effort to do home assessments.

Public Awareness

The public needs to be aware of the threat of wildfire and how to be prepared for such a disaster. Local fire agencies and programs should put forward a coordinated effort to provide standardized fire safe education for those people living at or in the wildland urban interface. At the present time there is not a standardized method for providing fire safe education in the county. The education program should focus on such topics as; defensible space planning; fire safe landscaping; what to do before, during, and after a fire; fire prevention; evacuation planning; and other fire safe issues.

During the preparation of this Plan two open meetings were held to inform the public of the **BONFIRE** Program and its purpose. The meetings included discussion of the origin of the program, the risk of fire in the wildland urban interface and the mitigation strategy to address the risk of wildfire in the interface.

The approach Inland Forest Management used to assess the risk of fire was presented along with a discussion of how the mitigation strategy will be implemented in Bonner County. Maps produced using GIS technology were used to show areas of high risk/high value in the county. Before and after pictures of hazardous fuels treatment work in Boundary County were shown as examples of the types of hazardous fuels treatment work anticipated in Bonner County. An explanation of how the program would work for the individual homeowner was also presented at the meetings.

The first public meeting was held January 22, 2004 at the Community Hall in Sandpoint. The meeting was attended by:

- 13 attendees from the public
- 3 employees of Idaho Department of Lands
- 2 employees of Bonner County
- 7 representatives of IFM

This meeting generated requests to participate in the program from twenty (20) different property owners.

On February 19, 2004 a second public meeting was held in Priest River at the Junior High School. The meeting was attended by:

- 12 attendees from the public
- 2 representatives from the West Pend Oreille Fire District
- 2 representatives from Idaho Department Of Lands
- 4 representatives from the Forest Service
- 6 representatives from Inland Forest Management

The meeting in Priest River generated requests to participate from five (5) property owners.

Fire Safe Ordinance

People, and the homes they live in, have a better chance of surviving a wildfire if they are surrounded by a defensible space and their homes are constructed of fire safe materials. In addition, access roads should be constructed to standards that allow for safe ingress and egress of fire suppression crews and equipment, while at the same time providing safe evacuation routes.

There is no requirement in Bonner County to construct new homes in the wildland urban interface using fire safe materials, nor is there a requirement for creating a defensible space. The need for an ordinance addressing these issues has been identified by the Fire Chiefs as a positive step toward wildland urban interface fire preparedness. This will not only reduce the risk to life and property from wildfire, but also decrease the cost of fire suppression.